

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

NOTICE 03-06
Revised

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RE: FOOD STAMP
EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING PROGRAM
(FSET): FSET 50/50
MATCH FUNDING

To: W-2 Agencies
Tribal Agencies

From: Bettie A. Rodgers /s/
Administrator

Purpose

In response to a question from a Milwaukee W-2 agency, this memorandum provides information about the Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) 50/50 (50 percent local share and 50 percent federal share) match funding that may be of interest specifically to W-2 agencies considering new collaborations with the technical colleges in the administration of FSET. In clarifying long-standing FSET policy, it enacts no new changes and imposes no new requirements on W-2 agencies, tribal agencies, or other agencies currently involved in the administration of FSET.

Background

Wisconsin receives funding from the federal Department of Agriculture to administer the Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) program. The purpose of the FSET program is to improve work opportunities and skills for recipients of food stamps. One primary means of administering the FSET program in Wisconsin is through local Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies, which provide FSET services under their W-2 contracts.

Federal FSET funding comes to Wisconsin in two distinct allocations. One is a 100% funding allocation based on Wisconsin's work registrants as a percentage of the national food stamp population. The other is a 50/50 (50% federal/50% state) match allocation, whereby state or local FSET spending is matched dollar for dollar by federal funds, with no limit to the total allowable federal contribution.

Since FFY 1990, the 50/50 match allocation has been Wisconsin's major source of FSET funding. The remainder of this memorandum details the process by which local agencies may apply to the state for additional FSET funding under the 50/50 allocation

the state receives from the federal government. The memo also describes additional policy considerations related to the subcontracting of FSET administration to other entities such as technical schools.

Application process

W-2 agencies may apply for additional 50/50 allocation funding by submitting a brief (4-5 page) plan amendment describing:

- program objectives;
- services to be provided;
- target group or groups;
- expected number of participants;
- program monitoring provisions; and
- an itemized budget that includes the source(s) of the local funding.

Itemizing and identifying the local funding sources is necessary to ensure that none of the funds that form any part of the local/state match are federal funds.

Area Administrators route plans to the DWS FSET coordinator for review and approval. Any approved 50/50 funding for these plans is added as an amendment to the base W-2 contract for that agency. Agencies charge expenditures to that funding under the headings of supportive services, workfare/work experience services, and education and training services.

Although agencies are encouraged to submit their FSET 50/50 match plans as early as possible (preferably between March and June) to coincide with the federal State Plan preparation period, they may submit plans at any time during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY), October 1 to September 30. Any expenditures claimed after September 30 will be reimbursed out of the allocation for the following FFY.

Technical school and other non-W-2 match-funding and administration of FSET

Under statutory provisions allowing W-2 agencies to sub-contract with other service providers, other entities may receive 50/50 allocation funding in return for providing local matching funds and in conjunction with local W-2 agencies.

For example, technical school funds can be used as a match to provide FSET program services, provided that all the funds are strictly local or from state General Purpose Revenue (GPR) and that no federal funds, from any source, are used to match the 50% federal share. However, any technical school funding and administration of FSET must be coordinated with the local county economic support agency to determine which participants should be referred to the technical school FSET program and to ensure that those same participants are not also called to participate in W-2 agency-administered FSET programs.

As a more general matter, any non-W-2 administration of FSET entails a three-way coordination process among:

- the Economic Support agency, to determine whether an applicant is eligible for food stamps and determine if that eligibility comes with a requirement for FSET participation; to respond promptly to sanction and/or exemption requests from the

FSET agency; and to communicate all changes in status (including income and exemptions) to the FSET agency; and

- the W-2/FSET agency, to enroll the participant in FSET; to provide the participant with detailed program information about such supportive services as transportation, child care and other work related expenses; to assess the participant's needs and skills and develop training programs appropriate to both; to enter all FSET program information into CARES; and to communicate employment information with the Economic Support agency caseworker; and
- the non-W-2 FSET agency, to ensure that FSET participation information is entered into CARES in a timely manner and to establish a direct communications medium (including integrated computer systems or networks) for sharing information with W-2/FSET and ES caseworkers.

Decisions about whether to sub-contract with other entities, such as technical colleges, to provide FSET services should be based on the documented ability of those entities to engage in this coordinated process.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: Area Administrators